

SOUTH AMBOY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2015 MEETING

Public Session

Vice Chairman Benjamin Block called the meeting to order and led the Agency Commissioners, professionals in the Salute to the Flag. He then certified that this meeting had been advertised as prescribed by law.

ROLL CALL: Benjamin Block, Zusette Dato, Tony Gonsalves, Camille Tooker

ABSENT: Kevin Meszaros, John O'Connell

Also in attendance: Eric Chubenko, Executive Director
Craig Coughlin, Esq.
Mayor Henry

Executive Director, Eric Chubenko opened the meeting by introducing a Resolution Certifying Annual Audit (*Agenda Item no. 7.A.1*) He said that all Commissioners should have received their Audit report electronically and that the Audit was clear again this year. There were no issues. He noted that this was only the Audit Certification Resolution which stipulates that you reviewed the section of the audit that says, "Were there any findings?" He said there were none.

Camille Tooker made a Motion to adopt Resolution M: 11-05-15:01. The Motion was seconded by Zusette Dato.

ROLL CALL: Block – yes, Dato – yes, Gonsalves – yes, Tooker – yes

Eric Chubenko noted that a certificate would be circulated at the next meeting for all Commissioners to sign acknowledging their review of the Annual Report of Audit.

Eric Chubenko then introduced a Resolution of the South Amboy Redevelopment Agency Approving An Access Agreement With Genon Rema, LLC and NRG Energy, Inc. (*Agenda Item no. 7.A.2*) He said that the Access agreement dictates the delineation of the acreage that the City was going to paint. Prior to the law suit, the property the City was going to receive was three acres. In the settlement, the City was awarded two acres. We had to delineate what the actual metes and bounds were for those two acres. Mark Rasimowicz and his surveying crew went out and got us the most advantageous layout for the purposes of parking or future development. This Resolution essentially authorizes the exact acreage that we are to obtain. After this it goes to NRG and as long as they don't object to it it's ours. If they do object, we potentially either have to go to the judge or an arbitrator.

Craig Coughlin noted that the crew actually was going out to do the survey next week so it is not yet completed.

Camille Tooker made a Motion to adopt Resolution M: 11-05-15:03. The Motion was seconded by Tony Gonsalves.

ROLL CALL: Block – yes, Dato – yes, Gonsalves – yes, Tooker – yes

Referring to Supplemental Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of Not To Exceed \$3,500,000 Principal Amount of Lease Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2015 of The City of South Amboy Redevelopment Agency (*Agenda Item no. 7.A.3*) Eric Chubenko said that the Agency already had authorized the issuance of the bonds for the purposes of making an application before the local finance board. This is now the pay down amount of the reissuance. He then deferred to Joe Baumann for more detail.

Joe Baumann said that the plan is to issue not to exceed \$3,500,000 worth of bonds currently. The expectation is that the Agency was going to issue only \$2,950,000. The additional amount is in case the interest rates change but they shouldn't. If the Agency issues the new bonds of \$2,950,000 it will pay off \$4.4 million worth of bonds. So we take \$1.6 million out of our bank account to pay off the old bonds issued. The result of all that is a savings of \$2.5 million. He said that most importantly, going forward, the Agency is self-liquidating.

Eric Chubenko noted that now the YMCA lease revenue now will cover the debt service for the YMCA bond. The local finance board was very favorable.

Zusette Dato made a Motion to adopt Resolution M: 11-05-15:04. The Motion was seconded by Tony Gonsalves.

ROLL CALL: Block – yes, Dato – yes, Gonsalves – yes, Tooker – yes

Eric Chubenko stated that the regular bill list was for Craig Coughlin legal fees and rent for the Agency office. He noted that the escrow bill list was all being funded by escrow so the only items coming out of the Agency account were legal fees and rent.

Camille Tooker asked who the South Amboy Real Estate Development release of escrow was for. Eric Chubenko explained that was for Parcel A.

Camille Tooker made a Motion to accept the bill lists for the operating account and the escrow bill list as presented. The Motion was seconded by Tony Gonsalves.

ROLL CALL: Block – yes, Dato – yes, Gonsalves – yes, Tooker – yes

A decision was made to table approval of the Minutes from August 6, 2015 to the December 3, 2015 meeting.

Joe Baumann said that the Agency was contacted about a month prior by the Sherman Group to advise that they have terminated their relationship with the O'Neill Group and that had brought in Matrix Development Group to be their development partner and said that the principals from Matrix were present to introduce themselves.

Joe Taylor, President and CEO of Matrix introduced Don Epstein, CFO and Chief Investment Officer, Richard Johnson. Mr. Taylor provided background, history and experience of the company noting expertise in waterfront residential development and experience managing multi-modal projects including collaboration with New Jersey Transit.

Joe Baumann noted that there is nothing to be done by the Agency at this point because control of redevelopment remains with the Sherman Group.

Don Epstein said that Matrix was working on site plans in conceptual form and timeline that they estimate would be delivered sometime at the end of first quarter, beginning of second quarter 2016. He did not anticipate that the first phase would be that much different from the plan from the previous developer.

The Commissioners expressed excitement about the future of the project and having the Matrix Group on the project. The Commissioners then discussed the best strategy for communicating the change of developer.

Eric Chubenko said the architectural review was conducted and signed off for Parcel A after addressing detail issues such as accents and material quality. The only outstanding issue was placement of HVAC units and Tom Kelly was working with them on that.

Mr. Chubenko then referred to a recent meeting with Woodmont regarding the property across from the Venetian. He believes that progress was made in trying to achieve a vision where all parties can agree. He noted receiving an email showing revised layout and hoped all parties could agree. He said it tentatively includes approximately additional parking spots to be used collectively between public parking and the YMCA plus façade upgrades with more character.

He then noted that one of the Joe Smokes buildings has come down and the site looks much better. There is an issue with demolition of the second building regarding proximity to the railroad tracks. It is a coordination issue with NJ Transit. Camille Tooker noted that they are due back in court and the deadline for demolition of the second building would be handled that way.

The Commissioners all commended the efforts to develop the City newsletter. Mayor Henry said that Camille Tooker deserves a lot of credit for that initiative. Camille said the next one should come out in January so it likely would be mailed.

Eric Chubenko noted that Terry O'Neill was no longer the CFO and Camille Tooker said that he remains the Director of Finance for the City. The CFO would take over the role of Terry O'Neill. Eric Chubenko recommended authorizing the new CFO, Angel Albanese, as an additional signer on the SARA accounts because she would be processing payments for the Agency.

A written resolution would be provided by Craig Coughlin at the next meeting for memorialization purposes.

Camille Tooker made a Motion to name Angel Albanese as the Agency Treasurer and authorizing her as an additional signatory for the checks. The Motion was seconded by Zusette Dato.

ROLL CALL: Block – yes, Dato – yes, Gonsalves – yes, Tooker – yes

Camille Tooker discussed revitalizing the Shop South Amboy program in an effort to help the businesses in town, try to foster good will and show them that we want them to succeed. She said that through the Shop South Amboy program everyone in town would receive a card and with that card they would shop at any participating business in town. At the end of the year, if they are a homeowner, whatever they spend using that card, a certain percentage is credited to their property tax bill. The businesses are not held to a certain percentage of a donation. They can offer specials or discounts. If you don't own a home, you would get a check instead of a property tax credit.

The program was presented to City Council and they loved it. It was presented to the Agency with positive response.

Camille Tooker said that to start the program the seed money needed to be raised. The South Amboy Business Association committed to a \$2,000 donation to get this started. The City Council agreed to fund \$3,000. The cost of the cards and initial set up is \$4,000 so there would be \$1,000 left for marketing and advertising which is not really much. Ms. Tooker asked the Agency for their support in this initiative and requested \$3,000.

Ms. Tooker said that a listing of all the commercial units in town was being compiled. She would like to send a letter out to all commercial property owners to send the details of all available commercial space and start a database where inquiries from interested parties could be referred to available properties. The Commissioners thought it was a great idea.

She further stated that if the Agency offered \$3,000 that would be enough to accomplish those plans. She said that she would use social media for most of the advertising outreach. She also met with Vince Blasi from the Chamber of Commerce and together with South Amboy, they were going to put out a magazine about South Amboy and its businesses and other opportunities. It's all about bolstering the economic development of the City.

Eric Chubenko said that the City needed some initiatives to help the businesses in town thrive.

Joe Baumann said that a Resolution would be written appropriating \$3,000 to the City of South Amboy for an Economic Development Program.

Camille Tooker made a Motion authorizing payment of \$3,000 to the City of South Amboy for an Economic Development Program. The Motion was seconded by Zusette Dato.

A written resolution would be provided by Craig Coughlin at the next meeting for memorialization purposes.

ROLL CALL: Block – yes, Dato – yes, Gonsalves – yes, Tooker – yes

Camille Tooker noted that SARA has a page on the City website where pictures and brochures could be uploaded to keep the public informed of updates and developments.

Vice Chairman Block opened the meeting to the public. With no public in attendance, he closed the public portion of the meeting.

A Motion to adjourn was made by Benjamin Block. Camille Tooker seconded the Motion.

Voice vote taken: all in favor.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by:

Stacey Kennedy